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ABSTRACT

A discussion of second language writing instruction illustrates how writing activities can be incorporated into regular classroom activities and outlines strategies for providing purpose, feedback, and assessment while integrating language skills and culture. Three stages in the writing process are identified: (1) recycling previous information and background knowledge to generate ideas; (2) reformulation of ideas generated in the first stage into a first and successive drafts, including editing and peer evaluation; and (3) reevaluation, by the teacher, of the final draft. Practical classroom techniques corresponding to each of the three stages are then offered. The first group is intended to help the teacher establish a purpose for the writing exercise; the second group helps in providing appropriate and clear feedback to students, either during peer editing and revision or in teacher evaluation; and the third group addresses evaluation of the final copy. Suggestions for grading are included. Appended materials include: guidelines for scoring composition content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics; suggestions for teaching students how to evaluate others' work; and a composition marking guide. Contains 29 references. (MSE)

Recycle, Reformulate, Reevaluate:

The Three R's for Writing in the Language Classroom

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Introduction

Writing in the foreign language classroom is often ranked by students as the least necessary as well as the most difficult skill to acquire in their efforts to learn a foreign language. This attitude is easily reinforced by teachers who, for a variety of reasons, do not always emphasize the importance of this sometimes neglected skill. Foreign language students need to learn to write as well as write to learn. Rivers (1975) refers to "skill-getting" activities that help students understand how the language operates, and "skill-using" activities that allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the language but in a purposeful, communicative writing task. Teachers often assume that their students know how to write in L1 and can transfer that ability to L2. This is seldom the case and students become frustrated because they do not possess the same language sophistication in L2 as they do in L1. As Terry points out, "We realize that writing is a skill that many have not even mastered in their native language. [...] [S]tudents often try to phrase their ideas in the second language as they would phrase them in English. They balk at being reduced to the use of basic 'Dick-and-Jane' language and structures in the second language and naturally feel frustrated at being reduced to the linguistic complexity of a five- or six-year-old" (1989: 43-44). Removing this frustration by teaching students that writing is a process and giving them strategies to generate ideas and steps to improve them will help reverse the negative attitude students have toward writing.

Teachers who feel uncomfortable or unprepared to teach writing would benefit from workshops or by reading educational literature that emphasize techniques and strategies on how to teach writing in the foreign language classroom. After all, one cannot be expected to teach a skill that one has not acquired. If a teacher is confident in teaching writing as a process, not only will the students learn to write better but both the teacher and the students may actually discover that writing can be a rewarding experience. As a result, students learn to write better and may actually enjoy it. The goal of this paper is to show how the writing process can be incorporated into foreign language classroom activities on a regular basis and to discuss strategies for providing purpose, feedback, assessment and evaluation while integrating all skills and culture.

The Writing Process

Instilling the concept of writing as a process by raising the students' awareness of what occurs before, during, and after composing gives them the metacognitive insights and training necessary to increase their potential as writers (Dheram 1995). The teacher must train the students in each stage of the writing process by employing a variety of activities. Several researchers (Zamel 1982; Lapp 1984; Richard 1990; and Magnan 1985) examining strategies used by skilled writers affirm that these writers spend time planning for writing, use a recursive, nonlinear approach, are reader-centered, review what they write, focus more on the message itself, and use revisions to clarify meaning. These are the types of strategies in process writing needed for training students to write better.

Recycle

The first stage in the writing process involves recycling previous information and background knowledge to generate ideas. The following activities can be done individually, in pairs, as a group, or with the entire class. Activities such as mapping, webbing, and brainstorming, provide forums for students to suggest ideas in a non-threatening environment that will be accepted as is and later categorized, modified, or deleted, as the student chooses. It is important in prewriting activities to encourage an open-minded attitude to all suggestions so that students do not feel threatened and will continue to participate. As students draw up vocabulary from past lessons, they may wish to include appropriate words related to the topic that they do not know. At this point, the teacher may put the L2 equivalent on the board. All suggestions are recorded upon the overhead in view of the students until they are in the second stage of writing. They can refer to the terms and ideas, and use what they need for their first draft. Since students are expected to write in the foreign language, they should be producing words and phrases in the foreign language. This strategy not only gives them the opportunity to show how much they do know about a topic, but it also helps eliminate a word-to-word translation from L1 to L2 by encouraging the students to use what they already know. With time and practice, students become more comfortable with this procedure.

Other recycling activities that ought to be offered at this stage include those that integrate listening, speaking, reading, as well as culture. It is difficult for novices and intermediates to

produce a good piece of writing without first experiencing a pre-activity based on one of the other three skills. The emphasis in teaching the receptive skills (reading and listening) is on the use of authentic materials such as literature and other printed media, videos, and audio cassettes of native speakers during interviews, or other real-life, natural situations. Authentic materials are not always easily available, therefore many teachers depend on educationally produced materials which, while not as motivating as authentic materials, still offer students the opportunity to learn new information. Both visual and audio materials are necessary for stimulating thought processes that will lead to writing. Most foreign language programs include audio cassettes that complement the classroom textbook. To integrate listening and speaking activities and use them as a springboard for a writing task, the instructor may choose an appropriate passage and have students listen to the passage once to get the gist of the meaning. Before playing the tape a second time, the students are instructed to listen for specific details. The third time through, the instructor places a transparency containing the script onto an overhead projector. Students follow the dialogue as they listen to the recording, trying to confirm or correctly identify the details requested by the teacher. Using the overhead transparency the third time allows visual learners an opportunity to feel successful by drawing on their learning style strength. At this point, the instructor leads a discussion on the listening passage and makes a transition by having students talk about a similar situation that they personally experienced. Through brainstorming vocabulary and ideas and writing them on the board, students now have a starting point for writing a personal account of the situation described on the cassette. Pictures, advertisements, surveys, and even forms (if included) from a target language magazine provide excellent opportunities to include culture in the discussion and subsequent writing task. The discussion or writing may focus on the

similarities or differences between the cultures. Using a variety of activities to stimulate student interest while integrating the four skills and culture ensures a well-rounded teaching approach which provides students with a balance in all four areas of language.

Using literature to generate writing has its advantages and disadvantages. Based on an investigation of university students' attitudes toward the study of literature in an intermediate foreign language program, Martin and Laurie (1993) found that only 16% of the students in the study expected that literature made an important contribution to the development of writing, 58% felt there would be some contribution, and 24% thought there would be little or no contribution. The study concludes with a recommendation to close the gap between the expectations of students and their teachers. The difficulty in using literature in a foreign language classroom is determining which works to introduce at the different levels while trying to accommodate the wide variety of personal taste among the students. However, when appropriate literature and other written texts are employed as models for writing, the teacher must keep in mind the linguistic abilities of her students in assigning compositions. According to Stern (1985) and Gaudiani (1981), students reading literature have an opportunity to acquire knowledge of the culture through a literary medium and to engage the content intellectually, provided that what is being read is linguistically appropriate for the level of the students.

Examples of literature-based activities include the "dramatic monologue" (the student assumes the role of a character and writes about a situation keeping in mind the character's feelings, ideas, and style of speech), the "dramatic dialogue" (a conversation between characters), and the

"pastiche" (students adopt the style or organization of a model while creating their own writing sample). One example of using the pastiche at the middle school level would be in creating cinquains or using a linguistically simple poem, such as Jacques Prévert's "Premier Jour" and have students create their own poem based on the model provided. At the high school level, students at the novice-high or intermediate low can write dramatic monologues based on Perrault's "Cendrillon". After reading the story of Cinderella with the students, students might enjoy retelling the end of the story from the point of view of the prince, one of the step-sisters, or even the "Gentilhomme" whose job it was to find the owner of the slipper. They might adhere to the traditional ending or rewrite it with an unexpected twist. At the university level, starting at the second semester of the first year through second or third year, students should be capable of reading Perrault's "Little Red Riding Hood" and writing a dramatic dialogue between the wolf and the grandmother that alters the original story, or between Little Red Riding Hood and the woodsman based on one of the American versions. The dramatic monologue, the dramatic dialogue, and the pastiche can be adapted to all levels of instruction if careful planning and realistic expectations by the instructor are in place before prewriting activities begin.

Reformulation

The second stage in the writing process, reformulation, begins with the product of the first stage and whatever was generated through the recycling activities. These ideas are written down to produce a first draft which is then proofread, edited, rewritten, assessed, and the process is repeated until a final draft is written. Techniques and strategies for accomplishing each step in the

cycle make up the bulk of this paper and will be presented later. The importance of this stage is to take the model or framework and reformulate it, for example by personalizing the model, using reading, listening, or speaking activities and reproducing a written reaction. Students are encouraged to use the feedback from each draft to restate their ideas in a clearer, better way.

Reevaluation

The final stage in the writing process is a reevaluation or reassessment on the part of the teacher. Assessment and feedback by peers and/or teacher is a continuous process during the second stage. The final reevaluation takes place when students surrender their copy to the teacher for assessment before publishing, sending, displaying, or reading the final product. Of course, to emphasize the process of writing as opposed to the final product, the teacher may decide not to collect the final copy. Another alternative is to give the students a choice of submitting a certain number of compositions from the total amount assigned. This way students can choose their best writing samples, somewhat like keeping a writing portfolio.

Purpose

While the above introduces the process of writing and its three stages - recycle, reformulate, and reevaluate - the following deals with practical applications including establishing purpose, providing feedback, and evaluating the writing sample. Teaching requires that an attainable goal be set and that the purpose of a learning activity be made clear to the learner. Both the teacher

and the student must have the goal and purpose in mind in order to make the exercise meaningful. In order for students to write, they must draw upon previous knowledge, recycle ideas and strategies, even use their native language writing experience if possible to help reformulate their thoughts for the current task of writing. When giving students a writing assignment, the purpose for writing should be for real life communication where writing is appropriate for the situation. If the assignment is to write postcards, have the students actually send them to each other or to a friend outside of class. If students write letters requesting information, have them sent to travel and tourism offices in francophone countries with the intent of using the solicited materials for a report to the class at a later date. Even if the assignment is to relate a personal anecdote, have students read their work to their classmates so that the writing is 'published' in some way.

Reading in class what has been written by one's peers has many benefits for the students and offers numerous extension activities for the teacher. Students hear the variety of topics and styles while they experience a feeling of success in being able to understand the majority, if not all, of what they hear. It also gives the reader a chance to speak and work on pronunciation in a real communicative situation. The teacher has the opportunity to check listening comprehension which gives the other students an additional reason for listening. Many possibilities exist for using student writing as a springboard for other activities. According to Dvorak (1986), the developmental view of the writing process for activities at the novice and intermediate levels is that these activities should be built upon oral activities. These activities contain recycled information and are most effective if "presented in context within a purposeful task and communication of the message is the primary goal" (Glisan and Shrum 1994: 184)

In establishing the purpose for writing, whether it be creative writing, a personal experience, or a letter seeking or responding to specific information, the writer must be aware of his or her audience. This awareness develops as peer editing takes place and the writer discovers she is writing for someone other than herself. The editor will ask for clarification if something does not make sense to the reader. As this occurs more often, the writer begins to anticipate an audience and will make an effort to ensure that the audience understand what is written without the need for revision. Knowing the audience usually directs the writer to the appropriate use of register or tone. To be sure students write in the correct tone, it is best to establish the register before students begin writing. Content, context, style, and other specific directions must be clearly indicated in advance, possibly through negotiations between teacher and students. Involving students in some of these decisions helps foster a feeling of ownership which leads to greater personal investment from the students. According to David Nott, a French teacher with thirty years of experience, if a teacher allows enough time in the preparation (listening, reading, discussion) and in the choice (negotiated between student and teacher) of the subject, the register, the context, and the style, one can lead a significant number of students to an advanced level of personal interest in a writing assignment (1994). With greater student choice there appears to be higher student motivation which produces a better composition.

Feedback

After identifying the purpose of writing and clearly establishing guidelines for content, context, and style, students take their ideas from the recycling, prewriting stage and reformulate them in order to compose their first draft. It is important to emphasize at this stage that students should write down everything they can think of without stopping to check possible spelling and grammar mistakes. The idea is to keep the thoughts flowing uninterrupted until all ideas are exhausted. The emphasis at this stage is on content and later, on organization. Only after having put all their thoughts down on paper do they stop to rethink, reformulate, and check for grammatical errors. Once a student proofreads his or her work and is satisfied that the composition is as error-free and comprehensible as possible, a peer editor at the same stage of completion is chosen and the two students exchange papers to edit each other's work.

Training students to be editors requires time and organization on the teacher's part. One of the most efficient ways to accomplish this is to provide a checklist (see Appendix C) to each student and take the time to ensure that each student understands what the items on the checklist mean and how to identify them. Elements that students will look at may include "clarity of the message, structural accuracy, vocabulary appropriateness, effectiveness of the organization, and mechanics" (Shrum and Glisan 1994: 186). The checklist can be teacher-generated or students may contribute to its creation. Major categories, for example "organization", may have subcategories such as - "Has introduction, development, and conclusion". As students complete the editing, or the reformulating, the partners conference with each other and indicate the strengths and the

weaknesses of the writing. Students must maintain a certain sensitivity during critiquing sessions. Pointing out strengths not only helps prevent editing from becoming an attack, but it also promotes a positive non-threatening environment for the writer. (See Appendix B for guidelines to peer-editing.)

Using symbols to represent items on the checklist expedites the editing process. Simplicity is advisable when creating a checklist, therefore the list should not be extensive and all-inclusive. It may also be modified to include additional items as they appear during the course. Alternatively, all items may be listed but only discussed as they become part of the information to be included in writing samples. It is important to keep in mind that students writing at the novice level may have only three to five items for which they are responsible. As students' abilities improve and as more content is covered, the number of items on the list increases, up to about twenty items for the advanced level. Students should feel comfortable with the checklist and confident in using it. (See Appendix C.)

It goes without saying that the activities described above would not necessarily have to take place all in the same class period. They could be divided into three separate activities (pre-activity and initial writing; first draft and proofreading; peer editing and conferencing) where one 45 to 50 minute class period would be enough time to complete activities up to the editing stage. Time should be allowed after writing and editing the first draft before asking students to revise and rewrite the second draft. This gives students an opportunity to bring a fresh outlook and possibly new ideas to their compositions.

As students begin their second draft, they should feel free to not only make the changes indicated by their editors, but they should also be encouraged to reformulate, expand, or delete details in their writing. The teacher ought to be available for students seeking advice on particular points of their writing. Writers may not always agree with a comment or correction given by the editor. In this case, the teacher acts as a mediator to settle the disagreement, explaining or directing the student toward an understanding of the choice(s). Ultimately it becomes the writer's decision.

Neither the students nor the teacher should expect all errors to be identified by the editor. The main purpose of having fellow students edit is to demonstrate that writer and editor learn from each other in their cooperative efforts to improve their writing and at the same time they become conscious of writing for an audience other than the teacher. There may be a concern that during peer editing, students learn each other's errors, reinforce errors they share and create what Selinker (1974) terms 'fossilization' - "the permanent retention of non-native inter-language forms" (Omaggio 1993: 268). While Selinker was referring to oral language, the possibility still exists of reinforcing incorrect written language. To avoid this, some techniques for the instructor to use during the reformulating stage include roaming the room, listing common responses to student questions on the board, and giving mini grammar lessons.

For the first few compositions, teachers may wish to emphasize writing as a process by requesting a third draft, possibly edited by a different student, and a final draft to be turned in to

the teacher. At this point, the teacher has several options: have the first and final draft submitted together and evaluate the improvements made; evaluate the final (fourth) draft only; have students hand in the third draft, assess the writing using the same checklist the students use, adding comments as necessary, and then ask students to revise their compositions based on the feedback provided. This last draft becomes the final copy to be evaluated. As students acquire the understanding that writing is a series of rewritings, a process of improving each draft, fewer drafts will be necessary as their writing skills improve. As with any activity, care must be taken to include a variety of exercises involving other skills and media to avoid too much repetition of the same activity.

Just as important as not discouraging students with too much writing, we as teachers must encourage these writers to take risks and reward those who do. Students learning about the process of writing should focus more on the comments than on the final grade. This is where teachers must emphasize the process, not so much the end product. Unfortunately, most students are grade-oriented and retraining students to appreciate the process is much more difficult. Teachers, too, are bound by numerical evaluations at some point. However, it is essential that teachers retrain themselves to focus on feedback as opposed to a final evaluation in the form of a percentage or letter grade. Once again, this can be accomplished by collecting less than the total number of writing assignments and assigning a grade, for example, to ten of fifteen writing samples.

In process writing, students depend on feedback both from their peer editors as well as the instructor. As Prema Kumari Dheram states, "Feedback seems to be as central to the process of teaching and learning writing as revision is to the process of writing" (1995: 160). Dheram supports Chaudron (1984) who, while investigating "the effects of teacher and peer feedback on ESL learners' revision of the work [...] found that both are equally effective in improving students' writing" (1995: 161). Based on research by Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990), Dheram points out that their study shows language teachers seem to focus on surface-level errors (language use) while students appreciate comments on both content and language (1995). Additional research by Crewes and McLeod (1986), Zamel (1985), Chenoweth (1987), and Shih (1986) indicates that when providing feedback to students, content and communicative function should have priority over language use. Dheram's study, based on issues involving the type and timing of feedback, outlines nine observations drawn from the results of the study (1995: 164-67). These general principles are good guidelines when teaching writing in any classroom - FL, ESL, and regular English classrooms:

1) Students can be trained to appreciate revision.
2) Revision should form an essential part of the pedagogy of writing.
3) Students can be trained to appreciate revision as a process of discovering new meaning.
4) Peer feedback encourages students writing reader-based texts.
5) Peer feedback on the first draft helps the student appreciate both the teacher and peers as collaborators rather than evaluators.
6) A three-draft approach to initial tasks is necessary.

7) It is important to monitor growing awareness in order to modify classroom procedures.
8) Comments should be prioritized and spread over drafts, and content should be recognized as the first priority.
9) Consciousness-raising procedures form an essential part of teaching writing [as a process].

Dheram concludes with a valid point in regard to teachers: "In order to encourage teachers to appreciate the need for and the purpose of such procedures it may be necessary to provide them with opportunities for experiential learning [...] in which they are asked to take an active part in writing workshops and to engage in the processes of composition and revision" (1995: 167). A student's view of writing may be negative if he or she has never been taught how to write. Teachers must also know how to write in order to teach their students. Providing workshops, in-services and other training for teachers ensures they have the knowledge and strategies to teach their students how to write. Knowing how to write is often taken for granted. Some teachers believe they should write with their students, act as a role-model and share their writing. While this is admirable, it may not always be practical when a teacher's role as facilitator is considered. However, a teacher may choose on occasion to write with the students and share what is written. Students often enjoy discovering information about their teacher. Sharing likes, dislikes, and interests helps build a rapport between the instructor and students.

Students need to feel comfortable in the classroom environment, and establishing a good rapport is essential for drawing students out, particularly the timid ones. At all levels, the instructor must work at encouraging students with positive, constructive, sincere feedback, while avoiding any comments or action that could be considered threatening. For instance, a teacher may think that reading a student's paper as a good example is a rewarding experience. However, the student may have negative feelings about having his/her writing read in front of the class. It is always best to check with students in advance if one plans to read a composition aloud.

While research has shown that feedback is effective to help improve writing, some types are more effective than others. On the one hand, simply underlining words or giving the correction does not appear to help the student learn why the mistake is not acceptable or how to correct the error. From his study of intermediate level German students, Lalande concludes that students should receive feedback on the "location and nature of [grammatical and orthographic] errors" and that the students themselves should make the corrections, ensuring the use of "problem-solving/active-correction strategies" (1982: 140-49). Using a correction code, on the other hand, directs the student's attention to the kind of error instead of leaving him/her guessing. (See Appendix C.) Omaggio (1986) and Hendrickson (1978) indicate that research generally shows that "overt error correction by the teacher is ineffective and may actually impede student progress" (Glisan and Shrum 1994: 188). Improvements in writing occur when students are responsible for rectifying their own grammatical errors (Lalande 1984; Walz 1982). In addition, written comments that are very specific leave the student in no doubt as to what needs work.

When providing feedback, it is always best to start with a positive comment, perhaps of a personal note, on the content of the writing. Symbols or codes certainly point out what needs work, but we do not generally use them to say what is good and what we like. Writers need to know this, too. Providing feedback based on content before language use has a double role. As Dheram points out, this helps students "appreciate the communicative function of writing and avoid premature editing and making revisions to the text at a surface instead of a global level" (1995: 167). While students are working on reformulating a draft, the teacher can roam the classroom and conduct mini-conferences to provide additional feedback to students. In this way, as Zamel points out, the teacher as reader "can discover the underlying meaning and logic of what may appear to be an incoherent text" and provide the writer with feedback on how to restate or reshape the text. At the same time, the writer becomes aware of "what lies behind and motivates the complex reactions of the reader and help the reader understand a text that [...] may have been ambiguous, elusive, or unintelligible" (1985: 713). With this kind of two way exchange, both reader and writer benefit from face-to-face feedback during mini-conferencing.

Apart from using peer and teacher feedback to revise and improve their writing, students may also track their errors. Using a form similar to the editing checklist and creating an error awareness chart from the checklist, students can keep a record of the types of errors they make and use the information to direct themselves through careful proofreadings. Paying close attention to situations where they are likely to make their most common errors, students can reduce the frequency of specific errors.

During the re-evaluation stage, an effective proofreading activity aimed at identifying errors common to several members of the class involves collecting students' drafts after the first, second, third or all three revisions. The instructor reads through all compositions with or without commenting on each. As a particular error is noticed in several of the papers, the instructor writes down any one of the sentences containing that particular error. This process is repeated until the instructor has about five fairly representative sentences containing five errors common to several students. In addition to these five sentences, the teacher includes one sentence that contains no errors and may even be particularly well written, reinforcing not only the clarity of the message but also what was learned from a current lesson. Including an error-free sentence demonstrates to students that not all sentences they proofread will contain an error, and not to expect to find an error in every sentence. In class the following day, the teacher puts the six sentences on the board or the overhead projector and asks students to proofread them by writing down a correct version for each. Since the papers with the sentences will not be collected, students should not feel threatened in any way. Once students complete this exercise to the best of their ability, the teacher discusses each sentence, one at a time, asking first for positive comments on either content or language use. After a couple comments, the teacher then asks what can be done to improve the sentence based on content, style, or language use. As recommendations from students are volunteered, the teacher accepts correct suggestions and redirects inaccurate ones. It is important that the teacher point out to the students that some modifications, while they may be acceptable, may not be what the writer wishes to express, and he or she may decide to keep the original version. Once students reach the error-free sentence, they will spend several minutes looking for errors and may eventually have to be told that there is nothing wrong with the sentence. They will

catch on more quickly the next time. After all sentences have been proofread, the teacher returns each draft to the students so they may begin a new revision, incorporating some of the modifications from the previous exercise if they happen to share one or more of the errors. Even students without these errors may find something they wish to change based on the discussion of the exercise. All students benefit in some way from this kind of activity, either by identifying an error discussed in the proofreading exercise or using the information brought up in the discussion and transferring it to some aspect of their writing to make an improvement. When changes are made involving a transfer of information, progress in writing skills are generally noted. This is the main objective of proofreading as a group.

Evaluation

After two or three drafts, students are ready to submit their final copy for evaluation. Students should be aware of the criteria to be used in evaluating their writing before turning in any work, even before revising the first draft. Having the evaluation criteria available helps direct the thought processes of the students as they compose and revise. The teacher may establish the criteria or may solicit suggestions from the students and work together to produce the list of criteria. (See Appendix A for one example of evaluation criteria.) Another decision in evaluating is whether to grade holistically, analytically, or using a primary trait. Perkins (1983) describes the advantages and disadvantages of the three types of scoring. The method of holistic scoring involves assigning a grade based on the overall impression of the text referring to a list of criteria. White and Caminero (1995) support Perkins' assertion that holistic scoring has the highest validity when

attempting to assess the overall writing proficiency. While this method is quick it can be highly subjective unless a competent rater, having been properly trained, is used to evaluate the writing samples. Analytical scoring, a second method of evaluation, includes giving a holistic grade for a set of criteria or categories to be used when evaluating a composition. The advantage of this technique over holistic scoring is in the feedback that indicates to the students where their strengths and weaknesses are found in their writing. Perkins points out several disadvantages to this system of evaluation:

a. A text is more than the sum of its parts, and analytic scoring may isolate the features of the writing from their overall context.
b. The highest score on any given feature may represent a standard that is too much to expect from writers at a given level of proficiency.
c. Scoring weights ought to be adjusted, to reflect the type of discourse, since scales with equal weights are not sensitive to variations in purpose, writer's role, or conception of the audience.
d. The procedure is relatively time consuming (p. 657).

In the third method, primary trait scoring, the evaluator focuses on a particular characteristic of writing such as the content, organization, style, or vocabulary, and assigns a holistic score. Within the characteristic being examined there may be a list of applicable traits. For example, using Gaudiani's (1981: 20) scoring scheme for grammar/vocabulary, a writing sample receives the following:

A = fluent with moments of elegance, few errors

B = comprehensible, few errors

C = substantial and significant errors

D = one or more blocks to communication

F = unintelligible

While a benefit of this type of scoring comes in the focus on a purpose for writing, there is a drawback in that this method ignores other aspects important to the writing process (Omaggio 1993). Teachers must weigh the pros and cons of the different systems of evaluation in view of the objectives and goals of the writing assignment. It is possible to use all three methods at various times, depending on the purpose of the writing task. As with any method in teaching, modifications of methodologies and strategies by classroom teachers allow them to customize ideas which in turn personalize their teaching methods enabling them to feel comfortable and confident in what they do.

Conclusion

Feeling at ease about teaching students to write may be due to the confidence and training one has in knowing how to get students to write well or to their potential. Writing is not a skill to be ignored or neglected. Once students realize the importance of writing and that they can become successful in writing, they tend to improve their writing skills. Whether used as a pedogological aid, a support skill, or a means to communicate a message, writing should take place in the classroom as often as appropriate for the level of proficiency being taught. At the beginning of the novice level, one might expect 10% of instructional time to be spent writing, possibly as much as 25% of instructional time for the novice-high level and anywhere from 25% to 50% at the

intermediate range. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for writing provide instructors a means to identify stages of proficiency which enables them to assign writing tasks based on the level(s) of their students. As students write and begin to understand the process of writing, they realize that writing is always rewriting; we are responding, recycling, reformulating, revising, rethinking, restating, re-evaluating, and eventually rejoicing. Students' writing improves as their understanding of the process of writing grows. A teacher's role is to provide the training and practice from which students gain experience and improve their ability to write. The goal is not to teach writing in isolation, however. Activities must integrate listening, speaking, and reading as well as culture to ensure that language skills are not "artificially separated", (Omaggio 1993: 348) but rather are learned in situations of authentic communication. The cycle of the three R's repeats itself within the writing process, something like a spiral. Students recycle, reformulate, and re-evaluate for the first draft, then recycle, reformulate, and re-evaluate again for each successive draft, all the while improving as they progress from stage to stage, draft to draft. The cycle only ends when the writing stops.

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Appendix A

ESL Composition Profile

Content

30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable • substantive • thorough development of thesis • relevant to assigned topic
26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject • adequate range • limited development of thesis • mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail
21-17	FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject • little substance • inadequate development of topic
16-13	VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject • non-substantive • not pertinent • OR not enough to evaluate

Organization

20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression • ideas clearly stated/supported • succinct • well-organized • logical sequencing • cohesive
17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy • loosely organized but main ideas stand out • limited support • logical but incomplete sequencing
13-10	FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent • ideas confused or disconnected • lacks logical sequencing and developing
9-7	VERY POOR: does not communicate • no organization •OR not enough to evaluate

Vocabulary

20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range • effective word/idiom choice and usage • word form mastery • appropriate register
17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range • occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage *but meaning not obscured*
13-10	FAIR TO POOR: limited range • frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage • *meaning confused or obscured*
9-7	VERY POOR: essentially translation • little knowledge of Target Language vocabulary, idioms, word form • OR not enough to evaluate

Language Use

25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions • few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions
21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions • minor problems in complex constructions • several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions *but meaning seldom obscured*
17-11	FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/complex constructions • frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions • *meaning confused or obscured*
10-5	VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules • dominated by errors • does not communicate • OR not enough to evaluate

Mechanics

5	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions • few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing
4	GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing *but meaning not obscured*
3	FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • poor handwriting • *meaning confused or obscured*
2	VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions • dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • handwriting illegible • OR not enough to evaluate

Source: Jacobs, H.L., S. Zingraf, D. Wormuth, V. Hartfield, and J. Hughey, *Testing ESL Composition: A Practical Approach*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1981, pp. 30, 92-96.

Appendix B

How to Teach Students to Evaluate the Writing of Others

The task for today is to read closely the papers of class members to both give and receive feedback on the papers; and (optional) to ask for any areas that the reader of your paper could suggest for improving the written communication. The steps are as follows.

1. Read each other's paper carefully.
2. Without looking at the paper, tell the author what you think he or she is saying, or, if it is a narrative, tell the story back to the author as precisely as you can.
3. Then your partner(s) should give you the same type of feedback on your paper.
4. After this, if you want to ask your partner(s) about anything which seems unclear, you may do so; if you wish to ask for constructive suggestions, you may. You might want to ask for such information as:
   a) Was there any place in my story that was hard to follow? (narrative)
   b) Is there any point that you just did not really understand?
   c) Was there any place in which my examples, reasons, or explanation needed developing?
   d) Was there any place where I should add more details to my description?
   e) Is there any place where I seemed to wander from my topic?
   f) Were there any transitions that were unclear or missing?
   g) Anything else that you want feedback on: spelling, sentence fragments, run-on sentences, punctuation, sentence variety, style, etc.

5. After each of you has given and received feedback on the essays, you may decide to rework your essay. If so, you may turn it in at the next class meeting; if not, turn in your essay at the end of class. Remember that good feedback is specific, not general. Constructive: "I think that this sentence could be more clear if you added some color words in your description of the trees." Destructive: "Your sentences are lousy." Also remember to check with your group members to make sure your comments are clear. The attitudes which make this sharing helpful are (a) mutual trust; (b) recognition that the helping situation is a joint situation of trust; (c) a real listening to each other; (d) a mutual recognition that whatever is said is merely how we subjectively see things and not necessarily the absolute, objective truth; and (e) a mutual recognition that we want to communicate effectively and that to do this we need reaction from others.

Source: Koch, C., and J. Brazil, *Strategies for Teaching the Composition Process.* Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1978, pp. 86-87.

Appendix C

< >	Position incorrecte J'ai un <intéressant> cours → un cours intéressant.
/	Effacer Je fais mes devoirs dans le soir.
angl.	Mot/expression anglais(e) J'ai acheté une voiture expensive. → une voiture chère.
( )	Forme incorrecte Il adore aller (à le) cinéma → au cinéma
Ac.	Accord incorrect Mes soeurs sont grands → grandes
Voc.	Vocabulaire faux, choix de mot(s) incorrect J'ai passé l'examen avec 80% → J'ai réussi à l'examen
ép.	Épellation, orthographe Mon program d'études est très difficile. → programme
^	Ajouter Le latin, une ^ facultative, m'intéresse beaucoup. → matière
?	Je ne comprends pas
S/V	Accord du Suj./Verbe Nous corrigez nos examens. → corrigeons
G.	Genre J'ai reçu un bon note. → une bonne
T/Vb	Temps du Verbe incorrect Autrefois, je n'ai pas étudié. → je n'étudiais pas
P.P.	Participe Passé J'ai suivre 5 cours ce semestre. → suivi
P.Pr.	Participe Présent J'étudie regarder la télé. → J'étudie en regardant la télé.

NS Nouvelle structure est nécessaire

J'ai eu un bon temps. → Je me suis bien amusé(e).

≡ (pas de) Majuscule

J'ai visité la tour Eiffel avec une fille Francaise. → Tour, française

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